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FM AMEMBASSY HARARE  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3284  
INFO RUCNSAD/SOUTHERN AF DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY COLLECTIVE  
RUEHAR/AMEMBASSY ACCRA 2213  
RUEHDS/AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA 2332  
RUEHRL/AMEMBASSY BERLIN 0864  
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 1609  
RUEHDK/AMEMBASSY DAKAR 1967  
RUEHKM/AMEMBASSY KAMPALA 2388  
RUEHNR/AMEMBASSY NAIROBI 4819  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC  
RUZEJAA/JAC MOLESWORTH RAF MOLESWORTH UK  
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RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC  
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 1481  
RHEHAAA/NSC WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L HARARE 000684

SIPDIS

AF/S FOR G. GARLAND  
ADDIS ABABA FOR USAU  
ADDIS ABABA FOR ACSS  
STATE PASS TO USAID FOR E. LOKEN AND L. DOBBINS  
STATE PASS TO NSC FOR SENIOR AFRICA DIRECTOR B. PITTMAN

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/02/2018

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SUBJECT: TSVANGIRAI PREVENTED FROM TRAVELING TO SADC SUMMIT

Classified By: Ambassador James D. McGee for reason 1.4 (d)

¶1. (C) Embassy has confirmed press reports that MDC president Morgan Tsvangirai, secretary-general Tendai Biti, and MP elect and shadow foreign minister Eliphas Mukoneweshuro were detained at Harare International Airport this afternoon and prevented from traveling to South Africa for the SADC Summit. According to Mukoneweshuro, the three checked in and were proceeding through immigration when they were told they could not travel. Tsvangirai's travel document was seized (his passport had been seized a couple of months ago) as well as the passports of Mukoneweshuro and Biti. All three were then allowed to leave the airport.

¶2. (C) The Ambassador called Tsvangirai who noted he was traveling at the invitation of SADC. He said he strongly supported a condemnation of the GOZ by SADC. The Ambassador said we would encourage SADC to do so.

¶3. (C) Tsvangirai also told the Ambassador he had received a phone call from ZANU-PF negotiator Nicholas Goche who apologized for the "mistake" and said he was working to undo it. The Ambassador then called Goche who, in a brief conversation, confirmed his conversation with Tsvangirai.

¶4. (C) COMMENT: The airport incident may well have been a mistake, perhaps initiated by the CIO rather than ZANU-PF structures. ZANU-PF has been spinning the breakdown in negotiations as the result of Tsvangirai's unreasonableness and refusing to let Tsvangirai travel can only create sympathy for Tsvangira and antipathy toward ZANU-PF. Nevertheless, the action of authorities, regardless of who initiated it, is outrageous and should be condemned, particularly by SADC. We suggest consideration of contacting SADC capitals to make this point. END COMMENT.  
MCGEE